

Rural Team Prepares for March Innovation Forum

DED's Lou Nichols, Warren Howell, Gary Hornbaker, and Ann Higgins are making preparations for The Forum for Rural Innovation: New Approaches for Agriculture and Rural Prosperity. The one-day conference, to be held March 18 at the Lee-Jackson Best Western Conference Center in Winchester, will showcase innovative ideas, projects, and programs by agriculture and rural business industry leaders.

The first-time event is being spearheaded by the DED rural team, but is a regional collaboration involving the Cooperative Extension and Agricultural Economic Development offices in Clarke, Fauquier, Frederick and Loudoun Counties, Virginia and Jefferson County, West Virginia. The forum will feature a series of presentations emphasizing high-profitability farming suited to the Mid-Atlantic region.

"We hope to show some of the future potential in agriculture, what's cutting edge and new," explained Lou Nichols. "Agriculture for some people is a highly profitable business, and the trick is to look beyond your own framework to see what else is out there."

Several industry experts have been lined up to participate in the event. Bill Dickinson, the Virginia Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, will lead a dis-



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Department's Prospect Activity—February:

- Responded to 300 requests for general information
- Conducted 4 business visits and 1 tour
- Distributed 155 marketing packages, 111 business guides, 30 maps, and 12 growth summaries
- Assisted 9 new business start-ups
- Worked with 16 new and 62 on-going prospects
- Submitted 1 proposal
- Received 38,630 hits on www.loudoun.gov, with 8,995 user sessions
- Received 28,891 hits on www.loudounfarms.org, with 1,461 user sessions

ED Committee Considers Business Incentives

During the February 22nd meeting of the Board of Supervisor's Economic Development Committee, Committee Chair Lori Waters, Supervisor Bruce Tulloch and Supervisor Jim Burton considered a list of Department of Economic Development concepts for attracting quality businesses to the county and increasing Loudoun's competitiveness with neighboring jurisdictions. This began a discussion of, among other ideas, a possible Loudoun County Government-owned business park.

Initial ideas considered by the committee included tax and zoning-related incentives. These ideas were followed by a discussion about the potential to use a 101-acre county-owned land site near AOL and MCI for a business park. The project could be an incentive to companies by providing special unmet needs in the supply of Loudoun County commercial space.

Board members directed county staff to explore a feasibility study, and scheduled a more complete discussion to be held at the March 15th meeting of the full Board of Supervisors.

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Announcements and Expansions

New & Existing Business



Using GuestMetrics, small to mid-size business have access to valuable Business Information without making large investments in software or IT staffing.



Time Warner Cable signed a deal that will allow their customers to use BIAP's software to personalize their TV experience. With a click of their remote, customers will receive precisely the information they care about, such as their sports teams news and their stock portfolios.

- ♦ **GuestMetrics** (www.guestmetrics.com) will move their operations from Reston to Merritt @ University Center I in late March. The 3-year-old company leased a 5,600 square foot location and is expected to hire up to 42 new employees in the coming year.

GuestMetrics is a web-based, cross-platform architecture that interfaces with multiple Point-of-Sale systems, identifies the customer through the credit card or loyalty program, and stores the data in a remote secure facility for follow on activity. GuestMetrics captures all transaction data directly from the food ordering process, associating table level activity by customer.

This comprehensive software will give restaurateurs the ability to collect and analyze data in real time; identify, target and respond to their guest needs; reward their best customers; improve service; increase profits; and build and retain profitable guest relationships. The software is designed to give

restaurants enhanced power, greater reach and faster processing of data.

- ♦ **BIAP Systems, Inc.** (www.biap.com), an interactive media company that develops applications for the broadband industry, recently expanded their Loudoun location by moving to a 10,074 square foot office at Merritt @ Loudoun Tech Center I.

BIAP has developed a suite of products based on mature artificial intelligence technologies for the broadband industry. These innovative products deliver previously unavailable services and features to broadband customers, including digital television, high-speed Internet, and telephony users.

The move to Loudoun Tech Center was precipitated by the need for additional staff and office space based on current and anticipated sales and new product development. Since BIAP's previous lease of 5,362 square feet on Atlantic Boulevard in Dulles, the company has added 23 employees, for a total of 49, and is continuing to hire.



Merritt @ University Center I



NEW WORLD APPS

- ♦ **Pest Management Services Incorporated (PMSI, www.mypmsi.com)** recently relocated their headquarters from their previous location on Bryant Road to a new space at Merritt @ University Center I. PMSI is a family operated full service pest management company servicing all of Northern Virginia, Maryland and West Virginia. The company leased approximately 3,500 square feet. PMSI currently employs a staff of 65 and expects to grow by 40% in the coming year.
- ♦ **New World Apps (www.newworldapps.com)**, a provider of secure custom hosting and professional IT outsourcing services to federal, state and local government entities, associations, and corporations, has relocated from Leesburg to Merritt @ University Center I. The company has leased approximately 2,700 square feet. Founded in July 1999, New World Apps currently manages production enterprise applications for over 50 of the Fortune 1,000.

In the News

- ♦ Following a 28-year career, **Washington Dulles International Airport Vice President and Manager Keith Meurlin** announced his retirement February 16. As manager at Dulles Airport, Meurlin directed the operations, maintenance, and commercial activities of one of the busiest airports in the country. Meurlin came to Dulles in 1977 following active duty with the United States Air Force. In addition to his post at Dulles, he was heavily involved in the local community, including his service on the Board of Directors for the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce and the Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association.

Loudoun County EDC member and President & CEO of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, James E. Bennett stated that “Keith has overseen a very challenging period of change and improvement at Dulles Airport ... his dedication and commitment to ensuring that Dulles kept pace with the tremendous growth in air service demand in our metropolitan region is appreciated by the aviation community as well as the many government and business officials he worked with over the years.”

Transitioning to the position of Vice President and Manager at Dulles Airport will be Christopher U. Browne. Mr. Browne joined the Airports Authority in 1988 after a career with the United States Navy as a naval aviator, and he is currently the Airport Manager of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, a position he has held since 1998.

- ♦ **The Virginia Small Business Financing Authority (VSBFA)** recently announced improvements to the services and programs it offers to state businesses. The organization has increased its maximum loan guaranty from \$300 to \$500 million, created a faster, more direct loan program that allows the VSBFA to make loans without a bank, and added new eligible industries including agribusiness, wineries, and businesses that provide for a locality’s “quality of life development.” The VSBFA, staffed by the Financial Services division of the Virginia Department of Business Assistance, is a statewide issuer of industrial development bonds, and is the organization through which the Department of Business Assistance provides financial assistance to Virginia’s businesses.



Keith Meurlin, above, and new Dulles Airport Manager Christopher U. Browne, below.



(Forum, continued from page 1)

cussion on Change and Innovation in Virginia Agriculture, while DED’s Gary Hornbaker will speak on the Enhancement of Traditional Livestock and Grain Marketing for Higher Profitability. Other topics being covered include Rural Innovation in Comparable Environments Elsewhere, Fruit Production Systems for Small Scale Farms, and Leveraging Farmer Skills in Environmental Markets. A panel discussion entitled “Regional Farmers in Transition—How Do They See The Future?” will also be held.

Exhibits by agricultural suppliers, businesses, and support agencies will also be on display. Nichols said that response to the event has been good, and he is anticipating 150 to 200 attendees. Registration, which includes the forum program, morning refreshments, and lunch, is \$25 and is available online at www.loudounfarms.org. Preregistration by March 9 is required.



G. Terry Sharrer, PhD, who is working with the Marion duPont Scott Equine Medical Center at Morven Park (above), will present a keynote speech that relates gene expression to modern thoroughbred athleticism.



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WWW.LOUDOUN.GOV/BUSINESS

Department and Commission News

- ♦ Warren Howell gave a farm tour to the participants in the Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference and Trade Show February 23. DED also attended and co-sponsored the conference, which was held at the National Conference Center at Lansdowne.
- ♦ DED is busy assisting the **Design Cabinet's** corps of volunteer architects, planners, and designers with a trio of new projects. Working with the Route 50 Task Force, the cabinet is creating a series of design guidelines for businesses along the Route 50 corridor. These guidelines will provide suggestions for roof-lines, building facades, and other architectural elements that will improve the overall look of the corridor. The proposed ideas will be discussed by the cabinet in March.

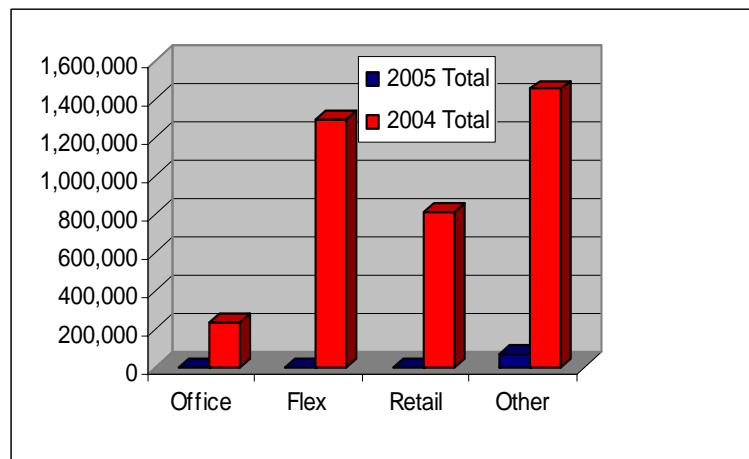
The cabinet is also busy planning the awards presentation for the *Signatures of Loudoun*: Design Excellence Program. This recognition program honors the creators of nine iconic Loudoun buildings, interiors, or architectural details from the dozens nominated by Design Cabinet members for consideration. The awards will be announced April 17 at the Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival.

Finally, the group is working on ideas for an April 15th design charrette discussing downtown infill areas of Hamilton. The event is the latest in a series of charrettes held in cooperation with the Main Street Loudoun program.

Construction Activity

In January 2005, Loudoun County permitted a total of 78,702 square feet (SF) of nonresidential construction. The combined value of new buildings (\$24,147,411) and alterations (\$2,662,896) is over \$26 million.

- ♦ Office — 0 SF in January and 0 SF in December
- ♦ Flex/Industrial — 0 SF in January and 245,628 SF in December
- ♦ Retail — 0 SF in January and 0 SF in December
- ♦ Other — 78,702 SF in January and 33,842 SF in December
- ♦ Taxable — 75,149 SF in January and 284,768 SF in December
- ♦ Route 28 — 73,646 SF in January and 231,668 SF in December



Nonresidential Construction — Square Feet Permitted
2005 Year-to-Date and 2004 Total